

# SEIZURES

Arizona Department of Corrections  
Health Service Bureau

Inmate Wellness Program  
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A **SEIZURE** is caused by an electrical storm in the brain. This should not be confused with pseudo-seizures or psychological problems.

## What are the Different Types of Seizures?

There are two main types of seizures--partial seizures and generalized seizures. Partial seizures begin in a specific area of the brain. Generalized seizures begin, at the same time, in more than one area of the brain.

## Signs & Symptoms of Seizures:

Each person has different signs and symptoms when a seizure happens, has happened or is coming soon. Examples might be:

- Loss of consciousness
- Loss of bowel and/or bladder control
- Jerky body movements
- Generalized non-responsiveness
- Post seizure confusion
- Tiredness

## Possible Causes of Seizure Activity

- Head injuries
- Brain tumors
- Drug/alcohol abuse
- Drug, alcohol, or tobacco use during pregnancy
- Problems in brain development before birth
- Certain genetic conditions
- Infectious illnesses
- High fever (especially in children)
- Stroke
- Lead poisoning

Seizures are usually diagnosed by the clinical history and an Electroencephalogram (EEG). The

An EEG test records the electrical brain activity. Health care providers review this test to see if there are abnormal patterns. These abnormal patterns may be seen in people who have seizure disorders.

A pattern of repeated seizures is called Epilepsy. This is a physical condition caused by sudden, brief changes in how the brain works. Epilepsy occurs when nerve cells in the brain send signals at a rate of up to four times higher than normal.

## Treatments for Seizures

Medication is the essential treatment for seizures caused by Epilepsy. Medications **MUST** be taken as ordered by your health care provider. If you stop taking these medicines as ordered, even if you feel better, it could cause seizures to re-occur. Medication should not be discontinued without the approval of a health care professional. It is your responsibility to tell your health care provider all the over the counter and prescription medications you are already taking.

Along with medications, your seizures will be better managed if you also follow and lead a healthy lifestyle, such as ensuring:

- Rest: Get adequate sleep
- Stress Reduction: Remove stressors or find healthy ways to manage your stress
- Diet: Eat a well balanced diet
- Exercise: Get adequate aerobic exercise

Medications, if taken as ordered, effectively control most patients seizures. To ensure you lead a healthy and productive life, follow your treatment plan.

## Summary:

Epilepsy is estimated to affect one percent of the U.S. population -- about 2.5 million people. Living with seizures does not have to be overwhelming. Through proper medication, healthy living, and good communication with your health care provider you may lead a seizure-free life.